GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:779
ANSWERED ON:22.10.2008
INDIAN FISHERMEN IN PAK JAILS
Gadhavi Shri Pushpdan Shambhudan

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Gujarat and Members of Parliament from Gujarat State have taken up the issue of release of Indian fishermen languishing in Pak Jails;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard and the response of Pakistan Government thereto; and

(c) the number of Indian fishermen and boats including those belonging to Gujarat still under the custody of Pakistan (i.e. PMSA)?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a) Yes.

(b) Issues relating to release of Indians including fishermen in jails in Pakistan are taken up with Government of Pakistan consistently in different bilateral meetings including at the highest level. During the visit of EAM to Pakistan on January 13-14, 2007, it was decided to form a Judicial Committee comprising retired judges from India and Pakistan to ensure expeditious release and humane treatment of prisoners and fishermen in either country. The Committee has held three meetings to date and has also visited jails in both countries to meet prisoners and fishermen in custody. Government expect the Government of Pakistan to implement the recommendations of the Judicial Committee to release and provide consular access to all detained fishermen and prisoners.

(c) At present, there are 435 Indian fishermen and 379 boats in Pakistani custody.